

Leadership Search



Director American School in Taichung

Taichung City, Taiwan

Application Deadline: October 22, 2019
Start Date: July 1, 2020

ISS is pleased to conduct this full search.
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Introduction

American School in Taichung (AST) serves students in grades 1 through 12. In accordance with Taiwan law and the school's charter, all students must hold a foreign (other than Taiwan, ROC) passport to attend AST. Families tend to be employees or owners of international businesses, have experience with international education, and wish to send their children to colleges and universities in the United States.



The school is chartered in Taiwan as a foundation with a president and a volunteer board of trustees. The Board establishes Board policies, provides direction and some financial support for major capital expenditures. The school is financed primarily through tuition and fees.

Mission, Vision, Goals, & Core Values

Mission

To prepare global citizens who strive for excellence, act with integrity, and value responsibility.

Vision

American School in Taichung is an international school with a commitment to excellence, integrity, and responsibility that prepares college-bound students for a rapidly changing world.

Core Values

- Excellence = being very good at something
- Integrity = moral principles, ethics, honesty, truthfulness
- Responsibility = moral accountability to ourselves and our community

Our School-Wide Aspirational Goals (SWAG):

- Critical Thinking: seek knowledge, evaluate information, adapt to change, and become confident in formulating original ideas and perspectives (excellence)
- Agency: demonstrate self-awareness, exhibit care and concern for others, make responsible decisions, and handle challenging situations constructively (integrity, responsibility)
- Global Citizenship: embrace cultural diversity, recognize global issues and impactfully contribute to lasting solutions (integrity, responsibility)



School Overview

Curriculum & Academic Program

AST offers an American style, quality education based on United States national standards (or Washington State standards for subjects with no national standards). The school's program is designed to serve expatriate students and Taiwanese students who have second passports and are likely to attend colleges or universities in the United States and Canada. Teachers hold teaching certificates from the United States or other western countries and have two or more years of experience.



The school day is divided into four 90-minute blocks with an alternating schedule for a total of 8 blocks. For high school students, a year-long, one block course awards 1 credit.

Students in Grade 10-12 have the opportunity to participate in the Advanced Placement program. At present AST offers 16 AP courses. The selection of AP courses offered allows students to be eligible for the AP International Diploma. Most courses are offered in alternating years. This allows AST to provide a wide selection of AP courses for a school of our size.

AST also hosts TAIMUN, the largest annual Model United Nations conference in Taiwan. All students from grades 8 to 12 are involved in the preparation and participation of the conference. Teams of middle and high school students also participate in MUN activities in conferences throughout Taiwan and in other countries.

Technology

One-to-One Devices

Starting in 2017-2018 AST has committed to One-to-One Chromebooks/computers for students. Class sets of Chromebooks were purchased for use by the Elementary School. Middle school students' tuition now includes a personal Chromebook which is managed by the school. High school students are responsible for bringing their own computer.

Impacts:

- Learning enhanced by easy access to technology such as digital textbooks, Google Docs for writing and editing, Khan Academy for math practice, etc.
- Intro to Computer Technology (ICT) course now taught in Upper Elementary and is no longer a requirement for middle school students
- One computer lab has been converted into a Student Center. The other lab will be converted into a Design Lab for courses such as Graphic Design and Publications.
- ES and MS teachers are able to easily monitor and control Chromebooks using Chromebook Management software
- There is a social equalizing effect in the middle school since all students have the same device where previously some had expensive devices, and some had none.

New Student Information System

In 2018/19 AST adopted Alma for the Student Information System. The SIS used previously was lacking needed features such as Chinese Characters, single sign in with Google, and integration with Google Classroom.

Impacts:

- Google single sign in means students and teachers do not need to manage an additional account to use the SIS.
- Alma is entirely web-based allowing administrators and admin staff to more easily access data.
- Google classroom integration allows teachers to more easily communicate with students.
- Alma is used to track student notes, behavior incidents, and attendance at athletics, clubs, and activities (features not available in the previous SIS)
- Some teachers struggled to learn a new SIS. Many found the new SIS intuitive and adjusted easily.

Clubs & Athletics

Elementary Clubs:

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| • ESOL | • Athletic Club | • Gymnastics |
| • Photography | • Lego | • Art (SM)ART |
| • Improv | • Cooking | |

Middle & High School Clubs:

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| • Minecraft | • Model United Nations | • Robotics |
| • Videography | • Environmental | • Cycling |
| • Interact | • Rock Band | • Chamber Music |
| • Guitar/Ukulele | • Equestrian | • Origami |
| • Digital Production | • Ultimate Frisbee | |
| • Chinese Boardgame | • English Support | |
| • Meme | | |

Athletics:

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|----------|
| • Fencing | • Swimming | • Soccer |
| • Volleyball | • Table Tennis | • Tennis |
| • Badminton | • Basketball | |



Students

Enrollment at AST has grown steadily across all three divisions since our last accreditation visit. The school saw an especially large growth during the 2016-2017 school year. The school is currently near capacity. Enrollment is expected to stay steady moving forward.

Demographics:

The AST's student population breaks evenly along gender lines (50% male, 50% female). There are some individual grade levels with rather lopsided male/female ratios.



Taiwan law requires students to hold a foreign passport (other than Taiwan, ROC) to enroll in an international school.

Analysis of student nationalities over the past three years shows no major trends. The nationalities of AST students have remained fairly constant.

187 Students (76%) of AST students speak Mandarin Chinese as a first language and 39 students (17%) speak English as a first language.

Analysis of the past three years reveals that the percentage of native English-speaking students has decreased. The percentage of native speakers of all other languages has remained fairly constant.



English Language Learners:

While enrollment decisions are made based on the current pool of applicants, generally, AST expects students to have an intermediate or higher level of English. Students who need additional support to be successful in English instruction are given ESOL services.

In the last six years, as enrollment has increased, AST has been more selective of students, expecting a higher level of English attainment before entering the school. Our ESOL program has adapted to a more individualized model to meet the needs of our current ESOL students.

Attendance:

AST students have high attendance rates. There are no concerns regarding attendance.

Retention:

In the last five years, the withdrawal rate has varied from 15 to 23 percent. The most common reason for student withdrawal is family relocation. This is part of the nature of an international school and is outside of AST's control. The next most common reason for student withdrawal is families sending their children to study abroad (often in the United States). For some families

preparing their children to study abroad is the very reason they choose to enroll in AST. This reason for withdrawal is also primarily beyond AST's control. The third most common reason students withdraw is to transfer to another school in Taichung (22 transfers to Morrison Christian Academy and 24 transfers to local schools in the past 5 years). These families have not left town but have selected a different school for their children. To improve AST's student retention these are the students who should be targeted.

Faculty

In response to the growing enrollment, the faculty and staff at AST have also grown. New faculty positions have been added each year. Along with new teachers, this has allowed AST to add specialized positions such as Librarian, Curriculum Coordinator, and Assistant Director. Starting in 2016/17 AST has employed teaching aids to support in the elementary classrooms as class sizes have grown dramatically.



Teacher Demographics:

AST recruit's faculty primarily from the United States and approximately 70% of the faculty hold US citizenship. Support staff are recruited locally. The school seeks to reflect the broad range of nationalities and ethnicities represented in the United States in our faculty. The gender of our faculty skews towards female (68%). This mirrors the demographics of the teaching profession in the United States where approximately 75% of teachers are female.



Teacher Education and Experience:

AST's requires faculty to have a bachelor's degree, hold a valid teaching credential, and to have at least two years of experience teaching in a western style school. An exception from these requirements was given to two teachers based on their expertise in their profession and their experience working with children/adolescents.

Currently, approximately 75% of AST faculty hold an advanced degree (Masters or Ph.D.). The average years of experience of all teaching faculty is 14. These numbers have remained relatively constant over the last six years.

Board of Directors

The Board's purpose is to clearly define and communicate the composition and purpose of the School Board. The school Board serves as a policy-making Board addressing specific issues related to the school's operations, facilities, and long-term planning brought to its attention by the Board Chair. There are up to seven Board members and they meet four times a year. The Board Chair may also call a meeting at his/her discretion when the need arises. The local members of the Board serve on a voluntary basis, donating their time and expertise in support of the school, but may receive transportation expenses when needed to attend scheduled meetings.

Professional Development

AST hosts an annual EARCOS workshop to provide professional development for all teachers. The 2017 workshop was titled “Learning Focused Instruction and Assessment.” In addition, ASTs provides optional “Just in Time” after school training on topics such as Gradebook, curriculum documentation, Google Drive, Docs, Calendar, etc. These sessions are led by teacher leaders or administrators.



AST’s budget provides teachers up to 400 USD for personal professional development. In 2017/18 about 50% of teachers made use professional development funds provided by AST.

Accreditation & Affiliations

AST has been accredited by WASC since 2001. The first two accreditation cycles were three years each. In 2007, AST was accredited for six years. AST was most recently reaccredited in 2019 for six years.

AST is a member of EARCOS (East Asia Regional Council of Schools). This affiliation allows teachers and administrators to participate in EARCOS conferences and workshops. In addition, AST hosts an EARCOS workshop annually.

AST does not have any formal business relationships. There is an informal relationship with the company Micron as Micron brings many foreign employees to Taichung and AST has been a popular choice for their children. AST has an active Parent Association that is self-governing and volunteers service to the school. We also have a HS Service Club affiliated with the Red Cross and another affiliated with our local Rotary chapter.

Campus & Facilities

- 7 classroom buildings
- 1 theater
- 1 admin building
- 1 activity center/gym/cafeteria



Fast Facts

Year Established	1989
Accreditation Agency	WASC
Total Enrollment	230
Lower School Enrollment	74
Middle School Enrollment	77
Upper School Enrollment	79
Number of Faculty	39
Nationalities	Taiwan, US, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong
Percentage of Annual Student Turnover	20%
Percentage of Annual Faculty Turnover	10 to 20%
Student/Teacher Ratio	6:1
Average % Home Country Nationals	76%
Tuition USD (2018-2019)	\$13,226 ES, \$14,129 MS, \$14,906 HS (Fees approx. \$3,226)
Operating Budget	\$4,000,000
Number of Board Trustees	7

Position Overview

American School in Taichung (AST) is looking for a dynamic leader who can work closely with the Board to guide the school through the strategic planning process to prepare it for future success. A small international school of 230 students in grades 1 to 12, the AST program fosters critical thinking, agency and global citizenship in its graduates. One assistant director and a dedicated staff as well as a recently completed reaccreditation provide a strong foundation for the future.

Duties & Responsibilities

As the senior administrator of the school, the Director is responsible for all school operations. The Director works closely with the Board chair.

Academic & Professional Qualifications

- M.A.in Educational Leadership or related field, administrative certification
- Five or more years of leadership experience in international schools
- Strategic planning experience working with a Board
- Leadership experience at multiple school levels (elementary, middle, high) desirable
- Familiarity with the unique opportunities and challenges offered in a small school setting
- Open to change, thinks in possibilities
- Good listener, sees strength in diverse views
- Values-driven leader of high integrity
- Culturally sensitive, engages locally and internationally
- Balanced, resilient, sense of humor

Skills/Experience/Attributes Sought

- Native English speaker
- Knowledge of Mandarin a plus but not required
- Future thinker
- Experience working with a Board in the strategic planning process
- US curriculum experience with current best practices in teaching and learning
- Skillful communicator, verbally and in writing
- Consistently fair and objective in relations and decisions
- Solution-focused, promotes design and project learning, innovation
- Experience with shaping advisories, advocating for student agency
- Demonstrated skills in staff development and growth/team builder
- Able to work collegially with a diverse and experienced staff
- Experience with standards-based assessment practices
- Knowledge of health, social-emotional learning, child protection
- Technology skills in systems and applied in teaching and learning

Salary & Benefits

Competitive salary with the following benefits:

- Housing
- Round trip tickets annually
- Medical and labor insurance
- Relocation
- Termination shipment \$3500, may be increased by \$1000 upon completion of each year
- Professional Development \$3000 annually

Application Instructions

Effective Date: July 1, 2020

Application Deadline: October 22, 2019

ISS Vice President for Administrative Searches & Governance Services, Dr. Beth Pfannl, will serve as the lead consultant for the American School in Taichung Director search. She will be assisted by Ms. Ashley Wotowey and other members of the ISS staff.

Please send a formal letter of interest (cover letter) specific to this position no longer than two pages, along with your CV in one PDF document to bpfannl@iss.edu and copy awotowey@iss.edu. You will be contacted by Ashley Wotowey regarding the next steps to follow for consideration.

Applicants are asked to submit their letter of interest and CV and complete all necessary application steps as early as possible, as ISS and AST reserve the right to close the selection process at any time if the ideal candidate is found.